

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Charlie Wilson (OH-6) voted to support our troops and veterans by ensuring critical funding for veterans health services and the construction of key facilities for training and housing our military. The funding is a 7.4 percent increase over the previous year for veterans health care and benefits, providing additional funds to speed up claims processing times. It also authorizes Congress to provide VA medical investments one year in advance to ensure timely and predictable funding.

“There are more than 75,000 veterans in the 12 counties that make up the district I represent,” Wilson said. “With troops still deployed in harm’s way in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is vitally important to support and care for each one of the men and women who wears and has worn our uniform in our defense. Each and every one of them has earned it and deserves it.”

This legislation, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, strengthens the VA workforce to tackle claims backlogs and to process new educational benefits provided through the new GI Bill enacted in the last Congress. It also allows the VA to process newly eligible claims for disabilities of Vietnam veterans and their survivors due to exposure to Agent Orange. The legislation also provides new family caregiver benefits for disabled veterans.

The bill addresses critical military construction needs to train and house our troops. It accelerates the Army’s program to modernize troop housing for trainees, addresses unfunded construction requirements of our Guard and Reserve and expedites the environmental cleanup on closed military bases.

With passage of this bill, Congressman Wilson’s tenure in Congress has seen a 70 percent increase in funding for veterans’ health care and benefits, over 10,000 new claims processors to reduce VA case backlogs, 3,389 new doctors and 14,316 new nurses, 145 new community-based vet outpatient clinics, and 92 new vet centers, including a new VA clinic, secured by Rep. Wilson, for Gallipolis in Gallia County.

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